

# **PRESS RELEASE FROM THE HOLY SYNOD OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA REGARDING THE DELIBERATIONS FROM 24-26 NOVEMBER 2015**

The Holy Synod of the Alexandrian Throne convened in Alexandria by invitation and Presidency of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, from 24th to 26th November 2015, dealt primarily with the examination of the records by the pastors of the various pastoral and ecclesiastical problems of the various Provinces and in Synod took some steps hoping and praying that these steps would prove to be viable solutions to the everyday life of the Missionary effort.

Through the individual presentations and activity reports by the Holy Hierarchs, general, individual and topical difficulties in the Missionary effort were once again presented.

1. Following thorough self-criticism on the start of the Apostolic Mission, the goals of Missionary work on the basis of contemporary theological, social problems and economic conditions were redefined.

2. Factional and “ecclesiastical” formations of dissention in Missionary Metropolises which breed future risks or other diversions, were examined.

3. The daily anxiety and difficulties resulting from the so-called financial crisis of society of those who support Missionary work, was heard.

4.The problem of pasturing the particular forms of the African family were dealt with.

5. The views on the various uses of Ecclesiastical dispensation in the so far unresolved and intractable problems were studied.

6. His Beatitude's proposal for the creation of five (5) extended pastoral regions in Africa, for more comprehensive planning, recording and promotion of the Missionary effort was approved.

7. Also dealt with were the Orthodox Communities in Arabic countries as well as the positive attitude that many of the Arab media have for the various activities of the patriarchate in Africa and in the countries of the so-called Arabic arc and the Middle East, with initiatives for religious tolerance, peaceful coexistence between peoples, the elimination of all manner of discrimination, the upsurge of fundamentalism and the possibility of finding solutions through the ecclesiastical endorsement of these contemporary problems.

8.The Sacred Body thoroughly studied the general course of the preparation for the Holy and Great Synod after the fifth Preconciliar.

9.The importance of the active participation of the Patriarchate in the Middle East Council of Churches was emphasized.

10. The effects of the upsurge of the flow of refugees from Africa into Europe were examined.

11.An update was given on the rapid development of the so-called "Charismatic Churches" and the Pentecostal movements which are gaining enormous ground in Africa after the USA and South America.

Faced with these situations it was deemed necessary to call

all Orthodox Christians in Africa to prayer, self-evaluation and repentance and to propose some measures, such as:

- a) Temporary suspension of construction work where possible and always in agreement with donors and the various associations that support Missions,
- b) Contribution by our African Orthodox brothers and sisters, for the correct operation and functioning of all our parishes,
- c) Securing and recording of all assets in every Province of the Throne,
- d) Initiatives to upgrade the call of the clergy and of the educational level of Priests as well as the reform of Catechism work with the emphasis on Ecclesiology.
- e) Enabling all Pastors to raise awareness among the faithful in local and international contemporary problems.

Glorifying the praiseworthy name of the Triune God they assign all efforts to the zeal and concern and self-sacrificial disposal of all the Missionary workers in Africa and together with His Beatitude they pray for the success of all their efforts and that the grace of the Most Holy Spirit would descend on all those who love the Revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.